

EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Meeting of April 7, 2010

Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Members Present: Bill Strassberger (Chair); Eric G. Luedtke (Parliamentarian); Anthony Ramirez (Secretary); Thomas J. Aylward; Kim Bobola, Ph.D.; Amjad M. Chaudhry, G. Stanley Doore; David M. Kochanski, Esq.; Peter Myo Khin; Allan Mulligan; Alfreda H. Payne, Ph.D.; Odessa Shannon; Benoy Thomas; Vanessa E. Ali

Members Absent: Marva Deskins (Vice Chair); Saschane M. Stephenson

Staff: Joy Nurmi (Director); Chuck Crisostomo (Asst. Director) and Anjoo Chohda (SEAA) Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center.

Guests: Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg (Councilmember at large); Alan Bowser (Staff, Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg's office); Richard R. Bowers (Chief, Fire and Rescue Services); Scott Graham (Asst. Chief, Fire and Rescue Services); Frank Carouso (GLCA); Craig Zucker (Chief of staff, Offices of Comptroller of Maryland); Kristin O'Connor (Senior Planner, M-NCPPC; Dan Wilhlem (Greater Colesville Citizens Association (GCCA) and Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF); Bob Bartul (Greater Colesville Citizens Association (GCCA) and Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF); Pam Saul (Staff, Sen. Rona Kramer; District 14, Montgomery County); Miti Figueredo (Staff, Councilmember Nancy Navarro's office); Mara Parker (Staff, Councilmember Marc Elrich's office); Kasey Wright (Staff, Sen. Jamie Raskin, District 20, Montgomery County); Jeanette Der Bedrosian (Gazette reporter); Teddy Wu (Resident)

Chair Strassberger welcomed everyone to the board meeting.

Citizen's Forum: Asked the guests to introduce themselves and share their concerns with the board. The floor was opened for questions.

Craig Zucker: Announced that the Wheaton branch office is offering residents assistance in filing taxes. Shared a list of the branch offices located in Maryland. Residents can contact Craig at # (410) 260-7561.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:25 p.m.

Chair Strassberger – announced presentations by Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg and Richard Bowers (Chief, Fire and Rescue Services).

Speaker:

1. Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg, Democratic at large:

Thanked board for the invitation and shared an update on the Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Budget. Montgomery County Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg (D-At-Large), chair of the Council's Management and Fiscal Policy (MFP) Committee, called County Executive Isiah Leggett's recommended

Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Budget a product of the region's economic downturn and an opportunity to build a new government foundation anchored in fiscal responsibility and long-term planning.

"These are new and challenging times for Montgomery County," Councilmember Trachtenberg said. "In the recent past, Montgomery County enjoyed budget surpluses and County officials debated how to expand social services and fund new community initiatives. Today, we face unprecedented economic difficulties and this will simply mean County government will look very different in the coming year. I am particularly concerned about services for the most vulnerable and what they will be in the years to come."

Councilmember Trachtenberg, who as MFP chair, will preside in the coming weeks over discussions and proposed modifications to the proposed FY11 budget, also believes that the Council has an obligation to establish a long-term goal for Montgomery County. Councilmember Trachtenberg has identified the need to look beyond 2010 to plan for the County's financial health.

Councilmember Trachtenberg said that, due to the continued severity of the current economic recession and the associated dramatic revenue reductions in the current fiscal year, Montgomery County faces a historic projected gap of nearly \$780 million in the FY11 Operating Budget.

The County Executive's recommended budget closed the gap. The proposed total County budget (which includes debt service, grants, and enterprise funds) for FY11 is \$4,304,288,414—a reduction of \$169.7 million from the FY10 Approved Budget—representing a 3.8 percent decrease. This is the only time the annual County Budget has been reduced since the adoption of the current Charter in 1968. In spite of the budget shortfalls, county continues to focus on its priorities on Education, Health and Human Services and Public Safety. She encouraged members to express their suggestions/comments/opinions.

Q&A session followed.

2. Richard R. Bowers (Chief, Fire and Rescue Services)

Chief Bowers thanked the Board for the invitation. The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service vision is to keep communities safe and healthy by providing the best fire, rescue, and emergency medical services, utilizing career and volunteer resources. Fire and Rescue is a combination department of 800 volunteers and 200 career Fire Fighters that are providing services to Montgomery County. The department responds to all **911 life threatening calls, fire, rescue, and emergency medical services**. Within the **Division of Operations** is the **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** section.

Montgomery County's emergency medical services (EMS) are world class and it is important that we do everything possible to keep them that way. Unfortunately, it's not easy as we are facing increasing resource demands and decreasing revenue due to current fiscal constraints. Under legislation for an Emergency Medical Services Transport Fee, **County residents will not pay anything**. The fee will be billed directly to residents' insurance companies, which have already factored the cost of patient transport into their rate schedules. The fee will be waived for uninsured residents.

On June 10, 2008, County Executive Isiah Leggett introduced to the Council [Bill 25-08: Emergency Medical Services Transport Fee - Imposition](#), which will allow the [Fire and Rescue Service](#) to impose and collect a fee to recover costs generated by providing emergency medical service transports from health insurance companies.

The choices are clear. Either a dedicated revenue source is needed to help keep our emergency medical services first class or taxes may have to be increased to make up the difference. Montgomery County is one of the few jurisdictions in the region that is not already (or in the process of) collecting an EMS fee from insurance companies. **Surrounding Counties that already collect the fee include:** *Fairfax; Frederick; Prince George's; Carroll; Charles; Arlington and Washington.* An EMS fee will keep our emergency medical services strong. It is projected to net at least \$12.7 million in the first full year of operation. One hundred percent of the net proceeds will be dedicated to meeting the rising costs and increasing resource demands, and to fund enhancements. New fire apparatus, additional staff, new stations in the growing upcounty area, and incentives for volunteer opportunities will all be supported by the EMS fee. The three levels of Service are: Basic, Advanced Life Support and Advanced Life Support II. There is no financial liability to this program. Chief Bowers requests the board to support Bill 13-10.

Chair Strassberger – The board will discuss during New Business.

Q&A session followed.

Chair Strassberger – Thanked the speakers for their presentations and for their outstanding work in serving the community.

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Strassberger asked for a review of the minutes of the ECCAB Meeting of March 3, 2010.

[**April 7th 2010-1**] A motion to approve the minutes of March 3rd, with the minor edits suggested by Tom Aylward was offered. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved

Director's Report – Joy Nurmi

Announcements:

- Joy thanked Kim Bobola and Allan Mulligan for serving on the new member interview committee panel.
- The Center is organizing an FDA Tour in conjunction with the White Oak Ground Breaking event on Saturday, April 24th
- Outreach Committee was reminded about the US Census 2010 outreach on April 10, 2010 at the White Oak Giant. A member sign-up sheet for April 10th outreach was circulated.
- East County newsletter – asked members to review it. The IDA sector meeting is scheduled on May 13th @ 10:00 a.m. at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center.
- Save the Date! May 22nd is Colesville Strawberry Festival.

Chair's Report – Bill Strassberger

Made two important announcements

- Effective July 1, 2010, the staff at the Eastern Montgomery RSC will be reduced. The board needs to find ways to support the Center.
- White Oak Recreation Center Ground Breaking event (10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.) and FDA Tour (for an hour) is scheduled on April 24th

Committee Reports –

Services Committee: Anthony Ramirez, Chair

County Budget FY11 and its impact to the police substation and the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center He talked about the letter that the committee drafted.

Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee: Tom Aylward, Chair

The Committee discussed the Burtonsville Commercial facade improvements, Bus, Development of the White Oak Police Station, sidewalks, EZ Storage plans are moving ahead, RCC Jesus House proposal (as mentioned in Director's report); Planning Director Rollin Stanley will conduct a walking tour around the Colesville Shopping Center.

Outreach Committee: Amjad M. Chaudhry, Chair

The Committee participated at the Census 2010 outreach to the community on March 27th; 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at Safeway, Briggs Chaney Plaza as organized by Chuck Crisostomo. Another outreach activity is scheduled on April 10th; 10:00-2:00 p.m. at Giant, White Oak Shopping Center.

Joy Nurmi – Interview Committee members were asked to describe their experience.

Kim Bobola – there were 14 applicants for 3 vacancies. The applicants were impressive. The committee is taking into consideration the geographic and diversity factors for selecting new members.

Allan Mulligan – added that the interview committee will recommend, however, County Executive will have the final say. County Council will confirm the appointed applicants.

Councilmember Nancy Navarro's office:

Chief of staff, Miti Figueredo announced:

- Councilmember Trachtenberg has covered all the budget topics. All council members are co-operating with each other on the budget issues.
- Article in Gazette regarding cars speeding on Robey Road.

Councilmember Mark Elrich's office:

Mara Parker announced:

- Easter Sunday, Sergeant Hector Ayala was killed in Wheaton, MD during a call for service. Viewing will be held at St. Peters Church, Olney, MD. Information posted on Montgomery County Police website at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/poltempl.asp?url=/content/pol/media/OfficerHectorAyala.asp>
- EMS fee Public Hearing is scheduled on April 13th; 7:30 p.m. at County Council.
- April 23-25, 2010 - Amnesty International Human Rights Art Festival will be held throughout downtown Silver Spring, Maryland.

Old Business: None

New Business –

Chair Strassberger –

1. ECCAB Testimony is scheduled on April 8th @ 7:30 p.m. The letter was emailed to members for their review and comments. Eric Luedtke will represent ECCAB on behalf of Chair Strassberger for the testimony.
2. Service Committee has drafted a letter advocating on behalf of East County, regarding budget cuts and its impact to County services and departments – Police Substation, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, East County Recreation Programs. A discussion among the members followed.

Eric Luedtke suggested a Motion to amend, and that the letter be passed.

[April 7th 2010-2] A motion was made to amend the letter with moving East County Police substation as the primary focus on the letter, followed by Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center and East County Recreation Programs. The motion was seconded by Peter Myo Khin and unanimously approved.

3. **Tom Aylward:** The Board needs to move its position on changing the date and underline Bill 13-10 on the letter.

Members discussed an earlier letter drafted by Kim Bobola supporting Emergency Medical Transport Fee, an approved by the Board previously. Upon further discussion and final amendments to the letter, another Motion was passed.

[April 7th 2010-3] A motion was made to amend the EMS fee letter with edits presented by Tom. The motion was passed and unanimously approved.

Announcements

Chair Strassberger – Need a member to attend the EMS fee Public Hearing scheduled on April 13th; 7:30 p.m. at County Council.

Tom Aylward – agreed to attend the EMS Hearing on behalf of ECCAB.

Amjad Chaudhry – A public meeting and Holy Prophet Day celebrated at Bait-ur-Rehman Mosque on Sunday April 11, 2010, 2-4 PM, Lunch starts at 1:00PM. The Board was invited to attend.

Chair Strassberger – asked Amjad to share this information in an email to the members.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m. **The next meeting of ECCAB is scheduled for May 5th 2010.**

ATTACHMENT *(emailed members)*

Director's Report – April 2010

The new Paint Branch High School to get underway soon!

Attendees at the **Paint Branch High School** groundbreaking on March 20th enjoyed warm, sunny weather, along with an inspiring ceremony.

Paint Branch High School first opened in September, 1969. When it reopens in 2012, it will be transformed into a state-of-the-art environmentally friendly school with LEED certification. It will be three stories and house 2,400 students, and will be located south of the current building near the football stadium. When the new school opens, the existing building will be demolished and new athletic fields will be built there. The new Paint Branch High School will have a 900-seat auditorium, 12 science labs, a greenhouse, 10 computer labs, and classrooms dedicated to art, the academies of science, media, medical careers, finance, culinary arts, NJROTC and child development.

To learn more about the new Paint Branch High School, click
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/paintbranchhs/news/index.html#Groundbreaking>

Groundbreaking for White Oak Recreation Center set for April 24th

East County is looking forward to another important groundbreaking. On April 24th at 10:30 a.m., join the County Executive for a ceremony to celebrate the new White Oak Recreation Center at 1700 April Lane.

Another state-of-the-art environmentally designed building, the new 33,000 square-foot recreation center, will include a gymnasium, exercise room, social hall, kitchen, senior/community lounge, arts/kiln room, game room, vending space, conference room, offices, lobby, restrooms, computer lab, multi-use athletic court, and storage space.

For more information on the White Oak Recreation Center, click
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/DGS/DBDC/RegionalProjectPages/EasternProjects/white_oak_rec_ctr.asp

SAVE THE DATE Colesville Strawberry Festival – May 22nd

More details later...

Third District Police Honored at Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce 2010 Public Safety Awards

We are proud of the brave and dedicated police officers who serve and protect the East County communities of Burtonsville, Calverton, Cloverly, Colesville, Hillandale and White Oak. They are:

Police Officer III Robert Mazzuca receives Honorable Mention of Valor
Police Officer III Ian Clark receives Silver Medal of Valor
Police Officer III Kevin Reese receives the Silver medal of valor
Police Officer III Robert Ulisney receives Silver Medal of Valor
Sergeant Robin Lewis receives Bronze Medal of Valor

Police Officer III Stanley Barsch receives Honorable Mention of Valor

You can read about their heroic efforts in this month's East County Intercom.

Burtonsville Revitalization

The Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee approved the Burtonsville Revitalization project on Monday, March 1st. The full Council will act in late May on the Fiscal Year 2011 Capital and Operating Budgets.

DHCA has some renderings of the façade improvements that are proposed for two buildings in Burtonsville. I will have them available at this month's meeting.

Third District Police Station

The mandatory referral for the Third District Police Station, originally scheduled for March 4th, was delayed until May 6th. Park and Planning staff and the County are working on the details of an increased buffer on the West side of the property.

IDA Sector

The next IDA Sector meeting is May 13th at 10 a.m. at the East County Regional Center, large conference room.

Ten Most Wanted!

The ECRSC, in partnership with the Third District Police, has begun distributing a "Ten Most Wanted" poster that is emailed out with our Weekly Crime Update for the Burtonsville, Calverton, White Oak, Hillandale and Colesville areas. We are also including this feature in our newsletter.

RCCG Jesus House

A religious institution, RCCG Jesus House, has submitted a pre-preliminary plan for a 2,000 member congregation for property near Rt. 198 and Old Columbia Pike. According to Park and Planning, the structures proposed are a multi-purpose building of 8,000 square feet.; a 5,000 square foot senior center; a youth church of 6400 square feet; a church of 36,860 square feet; and a children's church of 7,000 square feet.